DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 247 612 CS 504 623

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TITLE Decision Making as Negotiation: A Comparison of Two Labor-Management Committees.
PUB DATE May 84
NOTE 50p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Communication Association (34th, San Francisco, CA, May 24-28, 1984).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administration; *Advisory Committees; *Collective Bargaining; Communication Problems; *Communication Research; Cooperation; Decision Making; *Employer Employee Relationship; *Labor Relations; Models; *Participative Decision Making

ABSTRACT

To illustrate decision making as negotiation, this report utilizes P. H. Gulliver's theories concerning negotiation and two case studies of decision making by cooperative labor-management Quality of Work Life (QWL) committees. Negotiation as joint decision-making is discussed and two models that are central to Gulliver's theories of processual negotiation are presented: a cyclical model of information exchange between the negotiation parties, and a developmental model that maps the progress of the negotiations, guiding them with eight conceptually distinct phases that may more or less parallel actual phases in time. The report describes two labor-management committees that are part of a QWL program established to improve both the quality of working conditions for municipal employees and the services provided by city government. It then recounts the operating principles of the QWL program, its expansion, its committee based structure, and the consensus decision-making process it employed. A record of each committee meeting follows, with an abstract of the occurrences at each one. The first analysis section on negotiation as decision making concludes that Gulliver's theory presents little help in explaining why one committee acted successfully and a second inconclusively. The second analysis section concludes that the decision making of the successful committee may be viewed as negotiation because the committee built incrementally on a series of decisions made by the committee, consulted outside parties, and incorporated the diverse interests of different organizational stakeholders in its operation. (CRH)

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DECISION MAKING AS NEGOTIATION: A COMPARISON OF TWO LABOR-MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES

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Paper presented to the Organizational Communication Division, International Communication Association, San Francisco, May, 1984.

CS 504 623

DECISION MAKING AS NEGOTIATION: A COMPARISON OF TWO LABOR-MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES

During the last decade, decision making by cooperative labor-management committees has created a context for viewing informal and non-contractual negotiations (Zager and Rosow, 1982; Van de Ven and Joyce, 1981). Moreover, labor-management committees provide a context for considering small group decision making as negotiation. Such an approach contrasts with theories of small group decision making that posit fixed stages or phases of interaction (Bales and Strodtbeck, 1951; Fisher, 1970). Indeed, these theories recently have been criticized in the communication literature (Poole, 1983; Poole, 1981) for being excessively rigid and too narrow in scope. Organizational scholars, in turn, have shown an interest in broadening the concepts of negotiation (Bazerman & Lewicki, 1983; Strauss, 1978) and decision making (Tompkins and Cheney, 1983; Lindblom, 1981; March, 1981). Kochan and Verma (1983, p. 15) and Lindblom (1981, p. 245) both note that efforts to enhance these concepts are based on interpretive approaches to organizations. Thus, an interpretive approach is used in this paper to transform the concepts of decision making and negotiation by exploring the metaphor of "decision making as negotiation."

First, however, the opposing metaphor "negotiation as (joint) decision making" is examined; Gulliver's (1979) theory of negotiation is summarized and some of the implications for the relationship of negotiation and decision making are delineated. Second, two case studies are presented of decision making by cooperative labor-management (QWL) committees. These case studies are then viewed in light of Gulliver's theory of negotiation as well as in light of the metaphor of decision making as negotiation.

Negotiation as Joint-Decision Making

Gulliver (1979) has presented one of the most lucid and detailed theories of negotiation: the process of settling disputes through joint decision-making. The concept of dispute applies to conflicts between individuals or groups (Gulliver refers to both with the term, party) which are voiced in public and involve people in addition to the parties in conflict. Negotiation, as Gulliver (1979, p. 79) defines the term, only occurs in light of a public dispute; private conflicts, in contrast, are settled directly and solely by the interactants through "dyadic adjustment". Although negotiations usually involve supporters, representatives, or third-parties, the disputing parties jointly decide upon how to resolve their conflict. In other words, a third-party adjudicator does not make the decision for the negotiators. Hence, the outcome of the negotiation "reflects the relative strengths of the parties in terms of their resources of material and symbolic power and the contraints of moral and practical rules and values in the society" (Gulliver, 1979, p. 80).

Two models that describe the processual patterns of negotiation are central to Gulliver's theory; one is a cyclical model of the exchange of information between the negotiating parties, and the other is a developmental model of the negotiation. This latter model views the negotiation as a series of stages, from the initial confrontation to the final outcome. Gulliver uses the analogy of a moving automobile to describe the relationship between these two models. The cyclical model of information exchange and learning serves as the engine for negotiations, the process which turns the wheels. The developmental model maps the progress of the negotiations and serves as a guide for the journey.

The cyclical model (Figure 1) shows that the exchange of information has a variety of effects: By receiving information from each other, the disputing

parties may either change their own preferences or their set of expectations about the other party's preferences, or both.

Gulliver stresses that the developmental model (Figure 2) idealizes the general pattern of movement that characterizes succesful negotiation; he repeatedly states that for any actual case of negotiation, one or more of the phases may be absent, condensed, and/or further divided into other subprocesses.

> Summarily, these phases are (1) the search for an arena for the negotiations; (2) the formulation of an agenda and working definitions of the issues in dispute; (3) preliminary statements of demands and offers and the exploration of the dimensions and limits of the issues, with an emphasis on the differences between the parties; (4) the narrowing of differences, agreements on some issues, and the identification of the more obdurate ones; (5) preliminaries to final bargaining; (6) final bargaining; (7) ritual confirmation of the final outcome; and, in many cases, (8) the implementation of the outcome or arrangements for that. (Gulliver, 1979, p. 82)

The eight conceptually distinct phases may more or less parallel actual phases in chronological time: Some phases may take only minutes or hours to occur while others may take years.

The Relationship between Negotiation and Decision Making

Each phase of negotiation is constituted and maintained by the negotiators' joint decision-making. Viewed more speculatively, the traditional decision-making situation--as demarcated by Bales and Strodtbeck's (1951) seven conditions for their three-stage model or Fisher's (1970) seven criteria for his four-phase model--can be located between phases three and seven of Gulliver's developmental model of negotiation. For example, the orientation phase of both Fisher's and Bales and Strodtbeck's models seems quite similar to the third phase of Gulliver's model, while the sixth phase (final bargaining) of Gulliver's model is similar to Fisher's decision emergence phase, as well as

Bales and Strodtbeck's control phase (see Figure 3).

All group decision-making, however, is not just a subset of negotiation, nor is all negotiation just a more expansive view of group decision-making. The crucial point of similarity and difference between the two processes is whether an issue has become a point of dispute within a group and whether the group has become polarized upon the issue. Certainly some cases of group decision-making do center upon a clearly disputed issue, while other cases of group decision-making simply serve to reduce uncertainty among group members as to a course of action. In the former case, some group members do view other group members as opponents, and group decision-making may then be viewed as a form of negotiation; in the latter case, group members do not view each other as opponents. Since both Fisher and Bales and Strodtbeck consider conflict necessary for their respective models of decision-making, it would seem that there is considerable overlap between their models and Gulliver's model of negotiation.

It is fairly clear that the process of exchanging information (the cyclical model of negotiation) also occurs within decision-making groups. The applicability of this cyclical model to decision-making depends upon the attitude of group members. Do they view each other as colleagues or as opponents? The latter case allows a very straightforward application of the cyclical model of information exchange to group decision-making. However, even the former case would seem to involve some sort of information exchange and learning. The difference between the two situations of group decision-making perhaps would be in the willingness of group members to exchange information. Common sense indicates that colleagues would be more willing than opponents to disclose and receive information.

History and Structure of the QWL Program

The two labor-management committees that are examined in this paper are part of a Quality of Work Life (QWL) Program which was established in 1976 based on an agreement signed by the city, a union local, and a local university to develop a cooperative labor-management program that would improve both the quality of the working conditions for municipal employees and the services provided by the city government. This agreement stated that the program would be an experiment for 24 months; funding for the program was provided by a grant from the federal government, and it was supplemented by the city and the union local. The program held its first official meeting in late 1976, and by 1978 the program had grown to include two divisions within the city. At the end of 1978 the city-wide committee decided that the program should be continued, and a program-wide retreat was held to draft a set of principles for the program which was now funded solely by the city and the union local.

The QWL Program's Operating Principles

Five major priniciples for the QWL program were identified during the retreat: communication, attitude, cooperation, responsibility, and experimentation. These principles were articulated as follows:

1. Communication means the willingness to share information with an open mind and to recognize and to respect that there are different opinions.
2. An attitude of mutual trust promotes an atmosphere of mutual respect and open-mindedness.
3. Cooperation between different groups of employees, different levels of management, and different units or areas of the city means that program incorporates a wide range of individual, group, and institutional interests.
4. Responsibility means that program members have an obligation to identify

the goals of their work group, to analyze, investigate, plan, evaluate, and pursue these goals in a mutual manner.

5. Experimentation allows program members to test proposed changes, and it allows changes to be made within one area of a division or the city without affecting the operation of the rest of the division or city.

Expansion of the QWL Program

The city-wide committee decided to expand the QWL program to include a third division in the fall of 1981. This expansion meant that approximately 1200 city employees would be affected by the program since there are roughly 400 employees in each one of the three divisions. Considerable effort was expended by third party facilitators, union officials, and city administrators in laying the foundation for the new worksite committees; the first worksite-level committee did not meet until the beginning of 1982. Much of the time spent in the interim was devoted to determining the structure of the proposed division-wide program, the make-up of the membership on committees, times and sites for holding meetings, and conducting elections of representatives from the workforce for membership on the committees. The extensive planning and discussions undertaken to establish the new division of the program were analogous to the procedures followed during the initial establishment of the program in the other two divisions in the city and indicates the context of negotiation in which the QWL program exists.

The QWL Program's Committee-Based Structure

Compared to the city's organization, the QWL program offers an alternate but parallel structure of four levels of committees: (1) a city-wide committee, (2) a department-wide committee, (3) a number of division-wide committees, and (4) many worksite committees. While the structure of the QWL program parallels the hierarchial structure of the city administration, the locus of control is

decentralized. The worksite committees are empowered to make decisions that directly effect their working conditions, but they can not violate city-, departmental-, or division-wide rules. However, a worksite committee can suggest experiments to the higher level QWL committees so that changes in rules can be implemented on a trial basis. In short, the QWL program provides lines of communication between city employees and managers that would not ordinarily exist. This enhanced communication network occurs because of the make-up of the committees.

Worksite committees consist of both fixed and elected positions. Fixed positions are seats on the committee for people who occupy certain management and union roles; generally, the worksite manager and assistant manager have fixed positions as do the union steward and a designated union assistant. The elected positions are more variable in nature; each committee sets up guidelines for elections and determines how the workforce should be represented in the committee.

The division-level QWL committees include fixed positions (the worksite managers and union stewards as well as the superintendent of the division) and elected representatives (generally the chair of the committee) from the worksite committees. Representatives elected from the division-level committees sit on the department-level committee which includes the director of the department. The city QWL committee more or less serves as a steering committee, and it includes the Mayor, selected members of his cabinet, the President of the union local, and selected board members of the union local.

The various types of committee meetings serve the cooperative needs of the labor union local and city management as well as individual workers and supervisors by providing the following settings: (1) an arena for settling disputes that arise at the workplace; (2) a place in which technical,

work-related problems can be discussed and sometimes solved; (3) a forum in which cooperative labor-management decision-making can occur regarding work rules or policies; (4) a testing ground in which ideas for improving the work place may be developed and experimentally implemented; (5) a place and time in which "gripes" and "bitching" about work relations may be aired; and (6) a "neutral" place in which work related roles and status may be transformed and through which emergent social relationships may be developed and maintained.

The QWL Program's Consensus Decision-Making Process

Every QWL committee attempts to follow an informal process of consensus decision-making in which each member voices an opinion on an issue; if dissenting views are not voiced, the committee assumes that a consensus exists on an issue. Normally, therefore, formal votes on issues do not occur; when disagreements do arise, committee members attempt to reach a compromise or suitable settlement through informal discussion. However, even though each QWL committee member has the power to persuade other committee members, including city administrators, these same administrators have the power to veto any suggestion. Such vetos rarely occur without the committee as a whole reaching an understanding of at least the rationale for the refusal. Moreover, the striving for consensus decisions often leads to a reluctance on the part of the worksite manager (and even higher level administrators) to directly veto something the rest of a worksite committee considers worthwhile. For this and other reasons, some issues are not resolved by the worksite committees. In these instances, the committees have recourse to the division-, department-, and city-wide committees. Generally, these committees are approached in successive order, but most issues are addressed at the division level. However, experiments which would require a change in the city work-rules and/or the union contract are referred to the city-wide committee.

Case One: The DR Committee's Discussion of Flextime

For over two and 1/2 years the DR committee discussed a flextime schedule at its worksite, but in the course of only one meeting it decided to disband the subcommittee which was investigating the flextime schedule. The chair of the flextime subcommittee (VRG) immediately challenged this decision at a division level QWL meeting. He argued that some members had not had a chance to openly voice their opinions at the meeting, and he requested that the division-level committee order the DR committee to reconsider their decision.

During the following meeting, the DR committee readdressed the issue of flextime and reaffirmed its original decision. To understand the motivation for the DR committee's actions, the sequence of events that led to the committee's disbanding of the flextime subcommittee are examined. A timeline of events (Table 1) reveals 18 committee meetings, subcommittee meetings, and fact finding missions during which flextime was discussed and/or actions were taken.

The DR Committee's Membership

At the time this study occurred, members holding fixed positions on the DR committee were ALF (the plant manager), BOB (the assistant plant manager), VRG (the shop steward for the union local), and DEN (a designated member of the union). The eight elected members included the following individuals:

Name	Work Area	Status
ARP	laboratory	supervisor II
BIL	plant maintenance	electrician
BIM	plant maintenance	stockroom clerk
CLY	ground maintenance	supervisor II
DIK	ground maintenance	supervisor I
GEN	plant maintenance	worker
HRB	laboratory	chemist
RPH	plant maintenance	supervisor II

July 1979 DR Committee Meeting

VRG initiated discussion of flextime as well as a compressed work week in July, 1979. According to the facilitator at that point (A), VRG was motivated more out of self-interest than as a representative of the plant employees (which was his position on the committee until 1981). Nevertheless, the committee surveyed employee interest in both a flextime and compressed work week (4 day week with 10 hour days) schedule.

August 1979 DR Committee Meeting

During the August meeting, the survey results were reported: while there was interest in a flextime schedule, greater interest was shown for the compressed work week schedule. Notes made by the temporary facilitator at this meeting indicate that the committee was about evenly split in support of flextime, while about 2/3 of the members supported a compressed work week schedule. Moreover, two of the three supervisors who would be affected by a compressed work week were willing to help draw up a proposal.

September 1979 DR Committee Meeting

However, during the last meeting in September the committee dropped the compressed work week proposal because of a "change of heart" among employees; the committee probably was influenced by the fact that another division-level QWL committee had turned down a compressed work week proposal from a worksite committee. At this same meeting, further discussion of flextime was tabled until more information could be gathered based on the success or failure of a flextime schedule at another plant (MR).

April 1980 DR Committee Meeting

During its second meeting in April 1980, the committee heard an interim report on the flextime program at MR from that plant's manager, PAL. Various committee members later informed me that PAL attempted to present both the

positive and negative aspects of the program. He mentioned that the change from a stationary to a day-to-day flextime schedule had caused a problem with some employees punching in other employees time cards at the start of the day. PAL noted that when this had been brought to his attention he had issued reprimands to the involved parties. As far as PAL was concerned, the problem was resolved.

July 1980 DR Committee Meeting

The QWL facilitator at that time (J) learned that the practice of illegaly punching time cards was once again occurring at the MR plant and denounced the activity in a briefing paper to the W division-level committee. Based on this report, the DR committee decided to table disussion of flextime at the July meeting until the MR committee issued a final report on their flextime experiment.

June 1981 DR Committee Meeting

External events made the implementation of flextime more attractive to the plant work-force. From mid-1980 through mid-1981 a bridge, used by many employees to get to work, was under construction. The alternate route to the plant added approximately an hour of travel each day for these employees, and a flextime schedule would have alleviated some of the problems caused by the bridge construction. Hence, flextime remained salient within the committee, and in June, 1981, a subcommittee headed by VRG was formed to investigate the feasibility of such a program in the DR plant.

August and September 1981 DR Committee Meetings

The subcommittee broached the topic of flextime during the August meeting, and RPH and ARP (both supervisors) heatedly objected to implementing it in the plant. Much of the discussion at this meeting, and during the meeting in September, focused upon contentions about the flextime program at MR. At my

suggestion, the DR committee extended an invitation to the MR committee to discuss their flextime program. The MR committee declined the invitation, but they invited members from the DR committee to visit the MR plant and to see how the flextime program worked.

October 1981 DR Committee Meeting

During the October meeting, DIK and RPH (supervisor representatives) and VRG and BIL (union representatives) volunteered to visit the MR plant; I was asked to accompany the task force on their fact-finding mission.

October 1981 Task Force Visit to the MR Plant

VRG, BIL, and I visited the MR plant late in October; DIK and RPH were unable to visit the plant with us because of construction they had to oversee. VRG and BIL conducted interviews with 15 people in approximately two hours (8 am to 10 am). Their interview format was open-ended, and VRG asked most of the questions which were directed at various issues that previously had been raised at committee meetings. VRG and BIL interviewed the Supervisor I's (PEK and JIT) and the Supervisor II (JOE) of maintenance as well as the assistant plant manager (JIM). They also talked with the stockroom manager and various maintenance mechanics and laborers, and gathered favorable impressions about the flextime program.

November 1981 DR Committee Meeting

During the November meeting, VRG began to report about the flextime task force's findings, but he immediately qualified his remarks by noting that the subcommittee did not have a supervisor present during the MR visit. I interjected that BIL and VRG had gathered a balanced report since they had sampled the opinions of both supervisors and employees. However, ALF (the plant manager) still attempted to reprimand BIL and VRG for gathering information without the DR supervisors being present. DIK defended VRG's

actions: Since RPH and he had been needed on a construction project, he had urged BIL and VRG to go.

At this point, the committee agreed to table discussion of the task force's findings until a group of supervisors could visit the MR plant. However, discussion of flextime continued for a good 15 minutes, and VRG and BIL fielded questions from various committee members about the MR flextime operation. Many of these questions were based on the following perceptions:

1. Every worker had a key to the stockroom, and it was a mess;
2. Men coming in early punched in time cards for men coming in later since Supervisor I's were not always present at 6 am; and
3. Men coming in early or staying later than "core time" (8:30 am through 2:30 pm) spent their time "goofing off," e.g., drinking coffee.

VRG and BIL refuted these perceptions with the following explanations:

1. Only supervisors had keys to the stockroom;
2. Since PAL had issued reprimands to the employees punching other employees' time cards, this activity no longer occurred; and
3. Since JIT came in early (6 am) and PEK came in later (7:30-8:30 am), there was always a supervisor present so that men did not goof-off.

Following the meeting, DIK and I made arrangements to visit the MR plant for an early afternoon meeting in late November.

November 1981 Task Force Visit to the MR Plant

In contrast to the earlier visit to MR, the supervisor investigation was both more limited and more in-depth. DIK had told me he would be accompanied by SMT, his immediate supervisor, since RPH and CLY were not interested. However, RPH ended up accompanying us on the visit. We proceeded to JIM's office; JOE and JAY were also there. JIM suggested that since PAL was at a downtown meeting we meet in PAL's office because of the plant noise. RPH was

the most dominant member during the discussion, followed in harmonic order by JOE, JIM, me, and DIK. (JAY, as a lower level supervisor, was excluded from the meeting.) RPH immediately set the tone of the meeting by asking JIM for his real feelings about flextime. JIM and JOE cited four problems:

1. Employees goof-off early in the day since they wait for supervisors to arrive before starting work;
2. Employees resent working for more than one immediate supervisor;
3. Only a skeleton crew is left for the late afternoon since most employees arrive early in the morning (6 am) and leave early in the afternoon (2:30 pm); and
4. A mistrust of employees based on the suspicion that some employees still punch time cards for other employees.

RPH's position throughout the meeting was that "things are near perfect" and "we don't need flextime" since it would "wreck the good thing we have" at the DR plant.

December 1981 DR Committee Meeting

DIK, I, and VRG, respectively, reported on the MR flextime program "fact finding missions" during the December meeting. DIK reported that the flextime program at MR caused at least two problems. First, the crew overlap that occurred in the program (due to men and supervisors coming in anytime between 6:00 and 8:30) produced employee-supervisor conflict: some crew members resented supervision from more than one immediate supervisor. Second, the day-to-day, variable-starting-time flextime schedule resulted in many employees arriving early rather than late in the morning, and it meant that only a skeleton crew was present during the late afternoon.

I supported DIK's report and cited some more specific examples of problems with the flextime program. VRG was left rather undone by our reports. He

noted that on the first visit the MR supervisors had positively evaluated the flextime program, but they must not have been willing to say anything negative about the program to non-supervisory personnel. I remarked that VRG and BIL had done an excellent job of surveying a wide variety of opinion, and the MR management team had disclosed different information to RPH and DIK. At this point the committee tabled discussion on flextime until more information about the employee need for flextime was ascertained.

After the meeting I arranged to meet with BIL and VRG during the third week in December to construct a questionnaire to survey employee interest in flextime.

Mid-December 1981 Flextime Subcommittee Meeting

Neither BIL nor VRG was very eager to survey employee opinion since they believed that employees had too many misconceptions about flextime and that the employees needed to be "educated" before their opinions were sampled. Nevertheless, I urged them to construct a questionnaire and fulfill the mission they had been assigned by the committee since it was the most "politically" adept move for them. Unfortunately, I had little time to spend with them (approximately an hour) and not much was accomplished at this meeting.

Late-December 1981 Flextime Subcommittee Meeting

A follow-up meeting, during the last week in December, was held with another facilitator (B) who was also rushed for time; however, he suggested that BIL and VRG could pursue their wish to address the employees about flextime by asking the committee for permission to hold a general meeting or series of smaller meetings.

January 1982 DR Committee Meeting

Flextime was the first item on the agenda for the January, 1982, meeting of the committee. VRG and BIL asked the committee if they and other people could

speak to some of the employees about flextime. They proposed a meeting, sometime in the next month, in which the 23 members of the work crew would hear presentations on flextime and other alternative work schedules. After hearing about alternative work schedules, the workers would vote on whether they wished to investigate and/or participate in a flextime program. Since VRG and BIL did not fully delineate this proposal, the committee spent considerable time questioning them about it. In the course of this discussion, at least two counter-proposals were suggested by DIK and other members: (1) postponing or tabling any action on flextime until the MR flextime program is evaluated (I eventually undermined this proposal by noting that the MR experiment had been evaluated and already was implemented), and (2) surveying the work crews to assess their interest in participating in a flextime program.

The committee was split on the merit of both the survey proposal and the presentation proposal. The members supporting one or the other proposal cited the positive evaluation of the MR flextime program, while the members opposing the proposals emphasized the negative report about the same program. Since I had been present during both task force visits, DIK asked me my opinion about what action the committee should take. I advocated that the committee support BIL and VRG's proposal, and I mentioned that a compressed work week was also something that employees could be informed about. The committee discussed the merits of a compressed work schedule, but they again reached no agreement. At this point, DIK suggested that the committee table discussion on the whole topic for six months or so. However, I interjected that the subcommittee had reached its level of frustration and wanted either a go-ahead for some action or to drop the whole thing. GEN immediately made a resolution to disband the subcommittee which was put to voice vote with no further discussion. This resolution was passed by 4 votes "aye"; not a single dissenting vote was cast

even though 11 of the 12 committee members were present.

While the preceding account conveys the content of the January meeting, it does not indicate the emotions that surfaced during the discussion of flextime. For example, BIL expressed negative feelings toward the group as a whole, remarking repeatedly that "we're doing nothing but talking." Other members of the committee who opposed the flextime concept also responded in a negative fashion. Not only did ALF and ARP make negative comments about flextime, but also they also slighted the subcommittee's efforts. VRG, in particular, became the target for personal attacks by ARP, ALF and GEN. DIK's response to these heated exchanges was to propose that discussion be tabled for "six months or more." When I intervened to keep the discussion going, GEN proposed that the subcommittee be disbanded. The vote on this proposal came as the committee's emotional tension peaked; the vote released this tension as if a taut line were slashed with a knife.

Following the vote, the committee dispassionately discussed other matters for about 30 minutes. After the meeting I talked with BIL, DEN, and VRG about the flextime vote and expressed my amazement that they had not voiced their opposition to the proposal to disband the subcommittee. I pointed out that their "nay" votes would have been enough to deadlock the committee; then the committee would have reopened discussion on flextime. DEN argued that their abstention was a strong stand since it indicated their refusal to consider the proposal. In contrast, VRG stated that he was "relieved but not satisfied," and BIL expressed his anger about the whole matter. VRG then threatened to confront the committee about their unethical behavior: rather than seeking consensus, they forced a vote. In response, BIL said that "they [BIL, VRG, and DEN] didn't stand a chance" on a vote since management representatives outnumbered employee/union representatives. I keyed in on the representation

issue and suggested that it be brought up at the next meeting of the DR committee.

January 1982 Division Level Meeting

To my surprise, VRG not only brought up the vote to disband the flextime subcommittee at the W division-level meeting when making his routine report about the DR QWL meeting, but also accused the committee of unethical behavior for voting on the issue rather than seeking informal consensus. He then advocated that the DR QWL committee vote by secret ballot on the proposal. ALF immediately began to refute VRG's accusations by questioning the accuracy of his statements (for example, VRG said only three people voted; ALF claimed that six people voted). I intervened at this point because I felt VRG was not capable of arguing coherently with ALF in front of the QWL members from throughout the division. My intervention resulted in the division committee focusing upon my interpretation of the DR QWL meeting. The division committee members stated that they did not feel that VRG's complaint was justified and that his solution (vote by secret ballot) was worse than the original voice vote on the proposal. Grasping from the discussion that these perceptions were based on the assumption that a "voice vote" was another term for "informal consensus," I explained that the way in which the voice vote had been conducted (members simply voted "aye" or "nay" in unison) had seemingly inhibited many members from voicing any opinion. The division committee then directed the DR committee to reconsider the proposal and to reach a decision by openly voicing their opinions on the proposal.

February 1982 DR Committee Meeting

Another facilitator (A) accompanied me during the February committee meeting; he presided over a short discussion of the flextime issue and then directed the group members to sequentially state their support or opposition to

and each member spoke for a short amount of time about the proposal and then cast a vote. The resolution was supported by a vote of seven to four, with one abstention. After the vote on the proposal, A emphasized that the committee could still discuss flextime since the committee had decided only to disband the flextime subcommittee.

Case Two: The O Committee's Discussion of Flextime

The O committee discussed flextime for approximately 3 1/2 years; however, it is difficult to determine a specific date when the discussion was initiated since the committee engaged in a number of brainstorming sessions during 1978 in order to redetermine the committee's goals and objectives. During this period, tardiness, flextime, and crosstraining were major topics of discussion, and modified nominal group techniques were used to explore why these topics were salient. (An immediate result of these discussions was that the committee conducted an experiment to deal with tardiness.) However, by the middle of 1979, the committee seriously began to explore the possibility of implementing a flextime experiment. Nevertheless, an acceptable proposal was not drafted until the end of 1980, and the proposed experiment was not implemented until May of 1982. In short, the committee spent about one 1/2 years working on a proposal and another year and 1/2 trying to implement it.

In contrast to the previous case, the O committee had a positive outcome as a result of extensive discussion of flextime: not only was the flextime experiment implemented, but flextime also eventually became an accepted work practice. Table 2 aids the reader in tracking the events that led up to the implementation of the flextime experiment.

The O Committee's Membership

Members holding fixed positions on the O committee at the time this study was undertaken included JOM (personnel manager), JOD (engineering supervisor), GLO (shop steward), and DON (a designated member of the union). In contrast to the DR committee, the O committee's elected membership changed frequently and included a large number of people. The list that follows includes only those members who are mentioned in the narrative:

Name	Area	Position
BAR	Customer Service	Supervisor II
BEC	Administration	Secretary
CAL	Field Service	Supervisor II
CAS	Bookkeeping	Employee
CHA	Administration	Supervisor II
DOC	Customer Service	Customer Representive
HAZ	Bookkeeping	Supervisor II
HER	Field Service	Clerk II
JIC	Field Service	Supervisor II
PAT	Bookkeeping	Clerk II
SAB	Customer Service	Customer Representive
SUP	Bookkeeping	Clerk II

Other Important Actors

A number of other people play important roles in this study:

Name	Area	Position
DAF	Administration	Analyst
JAC	W-division	Superintendent
ROP	Department	Director

May 4, 1979 O Committee Meeting

The facilitator at that time (A) reports that the MR flextime experiment will be implemented the second week of June. (According to A, the committee was very interested in the MR committee's flextime experiment and had had members from that committee discuss their proposal with the O committee during 1978.)

June 5, 1979 O Committee Meeting

GLO reports that a questionnaire on flextime will be circulated among employees at the O worksite in order to determine employee interest in a flextime program. (The survey of employee interest in flextime, according to A, was an outgrowth the tardiness experiment. This experiment attempted to establish consistent rules for dealing with employee tardiness; one result of the experiment was the discovery that tardiness was not a problem in the worksite, but arranging times for personal leaves was a problem. Hence, the tardiness subcommittee informally initiated a survey of employee interest in flextime.)

June 16, 1979 O Committee Meeting

Results of the flextime survey are distributed to committee members as well as the superintendent (JAC) and the W division-level committee. A subcommittee is formed to investigate the feasibility of flextime: BAR, MIK, DOC, and CHA are the appointed members.

July 6, 1979 O Committee Meeting

Subcommittee reports that members are gathering information about flextime programs implemented by the public and private sectors throughout the city; flextime is placed on 7/20 agenda.

July 20, 1979 O Committee Meeting

Discussion on flextime is delayed until the 8/3 meeting since results of the tardiness experiment dominate committee discussion. (Moreover, according to A, contract negotiations between the union and the city administration begin to influence the committee; GLO warns that efforts to pursue changes in work rules, such as a flextime program, may be hampered by the negotiations.)

July 31, 1979 Flextime Subcommittee Meeting

The flextime subcommittee recommends to the committee chair (DAN) that flextime warrants investigation by a resource person who would conduct a feasibility study for the committee.

August 3, 1979 O Committee Meeting

The flextime subcommittee's recommendations are accepted by the committee. The committee agrees that flextime is worthy of investigation and a resource person should conduct a feasibility study for the worksite.

August 17, 1979 O Committee Meeting

The committee conducts a problem identification exercise and lists flextime as a possible solution to the problems of employe morale and productivity. "A" explains to JIC that a "resource person" would help conduct a feasibility study for flextime; such a person would probably be a student intern from the university. Importantly, A stresses that the committee, not the resource person, would be responsible for a flextime proposal. (According to A, the committee felt that the current contract negotiations between the union and the city administration made it very difficult to actively pursue any project since there was uncertainity about possible changes in city workrules.)

November 19, 1979 O Committee Meeting

A subcommittee is formed to investigate cross-training, and the committee supports the notion that cross-training may be necessary for the success of

flextime. "A" reports that the MR flextime experiment is enjoying success. (The interest in cross-training can be traced back to the August 17, 1979 meeting as well as the discussions in 1978.)

December 21, 1979 0 Committee Meeting

"A" indicates that a resource person (graduate student) to conduct a feasibility study may be available from the university at the start of the new year.

January 21, 1980 0 Committee Meeting

"J" is introduced by A as a new third-party facilitator; A reiterates that a graduate student from the university may be able to conduct a feasibility study on flextime. (At this time, the facilitation of the program was undergoing a transformation: individual facilitators were to be responsible for specific committees in order to provide a sense of continuity. However, A accompanies J for a few months in order to provide J with on-the-job training.)

April 18, 1980 0 Committee Meeting

"J" agrees to conduct a flextime feasibility study for the committee; according to A, the committee was stagnating at this point and J felt that the flextime idea would die unless some action was undertaken. Moreover, since J incorporated the flextime study into his academic requirements, he had mixed motives in accepting the flextime assignment.

May 9, 1980 0 Committee Meeting

"J" presents outline for the proposed flextime feasibility study to the committee; this proposal contains four major types of flextime and introduces the notion of "core time," i.e., a period of time during which all employees will be present.

May 28, 1980 0 Committee Meeting

The committee accepts J's proposal, and J agrees to complete the study and

to distribute copies to committee members. The committee decides to form a new flextime subcommittee once the study has been read by committee members. (According to both J and A, many of the committee members had been dissatisfied with the lackadaisal attitude of the orginal flextime subcommittee. Both the facilitators and these committee members felt that little had been accomplished by that subcommittee.)

June 13, 1980 O Committee Meeting

"J" presents the flextime feasibility study, and a flextime subcommittee is formed. Members on the new subcommittee include CAL, SUP, DAF, CHA, BAR, PAT, and GLO. Since this meeting was held jointly with members from another division (S), the committee questions representatives about their experiences with flextime. The S-division representatives report positive experiences with a variety of alternate work week schedules.

June 27, 1980 O Committee Meeting

CAL, chair of the flextime subcommittee, reports that a supervisor survey will soon be administered and that an employee survey will then be administered. CAS replaces PAT on the subcommittee (PAT leaves for medical reasons). "J" reports that the MR flextime experiment will end in July, and an evaluation of the experiment will then be made.

July 11, 1980 O Committee Meeting

SUP reports that the results of the subcommittee's flextime survey of supervisors should be available in the next few days.

July 25, 1980 O Committee Meeting

BAR reports that the flextime subcommittee is still analyzing the survey results; however, with 19 of the 20 questionnaires now returned, it is clear that no supervisor opposes a flextime program. As soon as the results are analyzed, an employee survey will be administered. BAR also notes that three

supervisors who previously opposed flextime misunderstood the core time concept and now are in favor of flextime.

August 8, 1980 O Committee Meeting

The flextime subcommittee reports that it has met four times and is preparing to distribute questionnaires on flextime to employees. "J" reports that the MR committee will not complete the evaluation of their flextime experiment until October 8th.

September 12, 1980 O Committee Meeting

"J" reports that the employee surveys have been distributed by CAS and that the subcommittee meeting planned for the 19th will be postponed until all the survey forms are returned.

September 26, 1980 O Committee Meeting

The flextime subcommittee reports that 65 of the 80 employees responded to the flextime survey. "J" reports that the MR committee has completed a draft evaluation report on the flextime experiment; as soon as it is typed, the committee will present it to the W-division committee.

October 10, 1980 O Committee Meeting

The flextime subcommittee reports that it will meet on the 13th and that the employee survey results should be ready by the next committee meeting.

October 24, 1980 O Committee Meeting

Most employees, according to the flextime subcommittee, are in favor of a flextime program with a core time period between 9 AM and 3 PM.

November 7, 1980 O Committee Meeting

BAR reports that the subcommittee feels that plans for a flextime experiment should be put on hold since a new computer data system will soon be implemented (in June/July) that may hamper an experiment. JOM, JOD, and PAT disagree with BAR; they argue that the subcommittee should go ahead with planning a flextime

experiment since it could be implemented and evaluated before the computer system is installed. The committee decides that subcommittee should go ahead with plans to implement a flextime experiment.

November 21, 1980 O Committee Meeting

CAL presents copies of flextime experiment proposal to committee members and proposes a target implementation date of March, 1981; however, he notes that the proposal must now be reviewed by the worksite supervisors. Each member of the subcommittee agrees to gather feedback from designated supervisors.

December 5, 1980 O Committee Meeting

The flextime subcommittee reports that it plans to present a revised proposal at the next meeting. The committee accepts a major policy change in the proposal: supervisory coverage of non-core time hours will be determined solely by the management.

December 19, 1980 O Committee Meeting

DAF presents the revised flextime experiment proposal to the committee, and CAL stresses that each supervisor will decide whether his/her work unit will participate in the proposed experiment. Additionally, the proposal still must be approved by the committee and the superintendent, JAC.

January 9, 1981 O Committee Meeting

CAL asks that all front line supervisors meet on the 13th to review the flextime proposal. The committee forms a Flextime Monitoring and Evaluation subcommittee to oversee the implementation and evaluation of the flextime experiment. Members on this subcommittee include JOD, JOM, GLO, PAT, HAZ, and BEC. (This subcommittee is necessary so that the proposal meets the 1979 standards set forth in reaction to the MR flextime experiment by ROP, the department director.)

January 23, 1981 O Committee Meeting

The committee discusses how to proceed with the evaluation of the proposed flextime experiment. Committee decides to use surveys to assess employee attitudes; JOM and JOD agree to prepare a pre-flextime program survey, while PAT and J agree to prepare a post-flextime program survey.

February 6, 1981 O Committee Meeting

The committee approves the subcommittee's flextime proposal; the proposal, however, still needs JAC's approval.

March 6, 1981 O Committee Meeting

CAL reports that the flextime proposal, though submitted to JAC (W-division superintendent), has not been approved; JOM and JOD note that they still need to complete their portion of the evaluation survey.

April 7, 1981 O Committee Meeting

JAC attends the O committee meeting and comments on proposal; CAL acts as spokesperson for the committee. Three issues emerge: (1) the purpose (objectives) of the experiment, (2) whether supervisors should be present during non-core hours, and (3) how tardiness will be handled during the experiment. CAL articulates the objectives of the experiment, and JAC agrees to meet with the subcommittee to resolve these issues and to submit, sometime in May, the flextime proposal and a cover letter to the director of the department, ROP.

April 14, 1981 Memorandum

CAL submits memorandum to JAC that articulates the purpose of the flextime program and proposes that supervision during non-core hours will be mandatory.

May 22, 1981 O Committee Meeting

The flextime subcommittee reports that as a result of their meeting with JAC the flextime experiment will not be implemented until September 1; JAC also

requests that the committee inform employees about the reasons for the delay. Prior to his meeting with the subcommittee, JAC met with all supervisors. The supervisors were concerned that the computer data system, scheduled to go on-line in June, would interfer with the flextime experiment, and they suggested August as an appropriate start-up date. However, after meeting with the flextime subcommittee, JAC agreed that the implementation date be delayed until September.

May 26, 1981 Memorandum

The committee submits (with JAC's approval) a memorandum, drafted by J, to worksite employees explaining that implementation of the flextime program will be delayed until September, 1981, for two reasons: (1) the training and orientation required for the computer data system to be implemented in June will hamper the evaluation of the flextime experiment, and (2) the experiment still has not been approved by the department director, ROP.

August 14, 1981 O Committee Meeting

The committee discusses implementing the flextime experiment in September; GLO argues that her work unit cannot flex at this time because of problems with the computer data system, but JOM argues that other work units easily could participate in the experiment. "J" and A intervene and ask the committee to reconsider the purpose of the flextime experiment, and the committee agrees to postpone the experiment. CAL is asked to draft a memorandum to employees informing them of the delay. (By this point, I have been introduced to the committee as a new facilitator to follow in J's footsteps.)

August 28, 1981 O Committee Meeting

HER (who was present at the last committee meeting) demands that the flextime experiment be implemented for people not affected by the computer system. PAT emotionally rebukes HER for being selfish; I intervene by pointing

out that the flextime experiment demands a fair trial which would not be possible unless a large number of people participated in the experiment.

September 24, 1981 Memorandum

CAL submits (with JAC's approval) a memorandum to worksite employees indicating that implementation of the flextime experiment will be delayed indefinitely until the organizational upheaval caused by the new computer data system has been resolved.

October 16, 1981 Flextime Subcommittee Meeting

The flextime subcommittee meets and discusses January as a target date for implementing the flextime experiment (this date has been suggested by JAC and the first-line supervisors). GLO again argues for a delay, noting that the work load usually increases in January; KAN concurs with GLO and adds that supervisors need ample lead time to implement the experiment. PAT, however, supports the January implementation date so long as the data system is working; moreover, CHA points out that more employees seem interested in flexing than previously because of the work changes wrought by the computer data system. The subcommittee agrees to meet at the start of January and does not decide on an implementation date.

January 14, 1982 Flextime Subcommittee Meeting

The flextime subcommittee meets with JAC to discuss implementation of the experiment. JAC notes that the proposal still must be approved by the director (ROP); however, he approves of the revised proposal. The subcommittee decides to recommend implementation of the experiment to the O committee and to meet with frontline supervisors.

January 22, 1982 O Committee Meeting

The committee meets with JAC to discuss flextime; JAC also presents an overview of the proposed W-division reorganization. Three points about the

flextime experiment are stressed by JAC: (1) the experiment will be successful if it meets the needs of the employees without hurting productivity, (2) participation in the experiment will be at the discretion of the work unit supervisors, and (3) the experiment will have to be carefully monitored and evaluated. CAL reports that a straw poll of employees indicates that 50-55 employees plan to participate in the flextime experiment.

January 28, 1982 Flextime Subcommittee Meeting

Frontline supervisors meet with the flextime subcommittee and with JAC to discuss implementation of the experiment. Two issues are addressed: (1) March 1st target set for implementing experiment, and (2) work unit start-up will remain at the discretion of the work unit supervisor.

February 26, 1982 O Committee Meeting

CAL reports that JAC has approved the flextime proposal and that JAC has sent a letter to ROP requesting his approval of the experiment. However, the start-up date for the experiment is now set for April 15th.

March 26, 1982 O Committee Meeting

CAL reports that the subcommittee in charge of evaluating the experiment now includes the following members: JOM, JOD, HAZ, CAL, CHA (as supervisor representatives), and GLO and SAB (as union representatives). (The reformulation of the evaluation committee occurred in order to provide fairly balanced management and union representation.) CAL also presents a letter from ROP that requests certain changes in the experiment: (1) all employees participating in the experiment must have a one hour lunch period; (2) all employees (including those not participating in the experiment) should attend orientation meetings; (3) the responsibilities of the supervisor should be more clearly defined to ensure that all employees have work assignments; (4) sign-in and sign-out sheets should be used by all employees; (5) quidelines should be

established to define what constitutes abuse of flextime.

March 26, 1982 Memorandum

JAC submits a memorandum to ROP requesting approval of the flextime experiment and suggests May 1st for implementation of the experiment.

March 30, 1982 Flextime Subcommittee Meeting

The flextime subcommittee meets to plan implementation of experiment.

April 23, 1982 O Committee Meeting

The flextime subcommittee presents an addendum to the flextime proposal that addresses ROP's concerns about the experiment. The subcommittee concedes to all but one of ROP's requests: sign-in and sign-out sheets will not be used since the worth of this procedure was discounted by the results of the tardiness experiment. (Indeed, this requirement met with strong opposition from the entire committee. JAC successfully argued against this requirement in a private meeting with ROP in which May 1st was reaffirmed as the start-up date for the experiment.)

May 7, 1982 O Committee Meeting

CAL reports that the flextime experiment was implemented on May 3rd.

Analysis I: Negotiation as Decision Making

The second case study is perhaps more easily viewed as negotiation from Gulliver's point of view than is the first case study. Certainly, the developmental model seems to be applicable to the second case: the O committee initially felt uncertain whether the QWL program was an appropriate arena for flextime. GLO, in particular, made it clear that the contract negotiations between the union and the city administration might be the more appropriate place for this discussion. Moreover, the period between mid-1979 and mid-1980 may be seen as the second phase of the negotiations in which an agenda is laid

out and issues become defined. The first flextime subcommittee demonstrated that there was a felt need for flextime, while the work undertaken by J defined the issues concerning flextime for the O committee. The remainder of 1980 seems more in line with Gulliver's third phase; the disagreements that arise during the November and December meetings indicate the different interests of the committee members. A narrowing of differences occurs during early 1981 as agreement is reached by the committee on the flextime proposal. At this point, a change occurs in the committee's negotiation; while differences remain within the committee, the focus for negotiation is now the city administration. The hiatus during the summer and fall of 1981 leads into the fifth phase of the negotiations in which the committee seeks to reach agreement with JAC on the proposal. The new year brings about the sixth phase of final bargaining in which JAC and ROP make their positions clear and the committee successfully trades concessions. The flurry of memorandums that are exchanged during March and April confirm the outcome (phase 7) and the flextime experiment is implemented (phase 8) as negotiated, in May.

The first case does not present as neat a fit with Gulliver's developmental model of negotiation: the DR committee does not seem to get past phase three (emphasis on differences) of Gulliver's model. Nevertheless, the actions taken by the committee in 1979 and 1980 make it clear that flextime may be addressed during the DR committee meetings: an arena for negotiations is in place. Also, the discussions during the late summer of 1981 serve as a second phase in which issues about flextime do get aired within the DR committee. A shift into Gulliver's third phase seems apparent with the initiation of fact-finding missions by the committee. However, all this preliminary work falls apart by the beginning of 1982 as the opposition to flextime is finally expressed.

Apparently, the two case studies do, to some extent, fit Gulliver's notion

of negotiation as joint-decision making. Yet, Gulliver's theory presents little help in explaining why the DR committee spun its wheels for 2 and 1/2 years, while the O committee successfully implemented a flextime experiment.

Analysis II: Decision Making as Negotiation

Several points seem noteworthy about the first case study. First, the January, 1982, meeting had a strong emotional undercurrent: VRG and BIL expressed negative feelings toward the DR committee, while ALF, ARP and GEN expressed similar emotions toward the flextime subcommittee. These negative emotions suggest that the committee was expressing what Bion (1961) calls a basic-assumption. Second, the hostile expressions seemed to follow remarks in which the passage of time was emphasized. This was particularly notable when I attempted to keep discussion open on flextime subsequent to DIK's suggestion that the topic be tabled: GEN immediately moved that the subcommittee be disbanded. These hostile reactions are congruent with Bion's (1961) points that (1) an inherent characteristic of basic-assumption mentality is a lack of awareness of time, and (2) activities that require an awareness of time tend to arouse hostile feelings among group members. Third, even though the group had discussed many of the issues previously, it could not build upon any point of agreement about flextime; rather, the discussion seemingly went in circles. This last point suggests that the committee was not able to develop its thinking, just as a basic-assumption group is incapable of mental development.

Taking a broader view of the DR committee's discussion of flextime, the numerous instances in which discussion was tabled indicates that the committee was fleeing from making a decision. In other words, the basic-assumption influencing the committee was that of fight-flight. The disagreements that marked the late summer and fall discussions of the committee in 1981 also

support this claim and indicate that the committee vacilated between fleeing and fighting.

In contrast to the DR committee, the O committee's discussion of flextime was seldom colored by emotionality. Rather, the committee seemed committed to building incrementally upon a series of decisions--decisions made by the committee as a whole as well as decisions made by the subcommittee. For example, the commitment to a flextime experiment was not decided in one meeting but was negotiated over the period of almost two years (1979-1981). Moreover, the committee formulated the flextime proposal in consultation with numerous parties: (1) the opinions of both supervisors and employees were taken into account even before a proposal was suggested in 1979; (2) an expert (J) was consulted for the feasibility study; (3) supervisory opinion was reassessed and issues of contention (e.g., core time) were clarified; (4) employee opinion was reassessed and employee interests were incorporated in the proposal (core time between 9 AM - 3 PM); (5) upper management concerns were addressed since JAC was consulted a number of times; (6) city-wide concerns (ROP's requests) were also addressed. This listing suggests that the O committee attempted to incorporate the diverse interests of different organizational "stakeholders" in its decision making. In this sense, the O committee's decision making may be viewed as negotiation.

Toward a Theory of Dialogue

In as much as Gulliver's developmental model of negotiation depends on the negotiators' dilemma of being simultaneously in conflict and interdependent, questions of how the negotiators can reach consensual (jointly made) decisions arise. On what grounds can a negotiator accept the other's offers and/or demands? On what basis can a negotiator show that an offer and/or demand is

reasonable? Only if negotiators can agree to the reasonableness of demands/offers will the negotiation progress to its final phase. Gulliver's developmental model depends upon an implicit theory of consensual reasoning.

Gulliver uses an explicit theory of communication as information transfer to model the cyclical exchange of information that occurs during negotiation. He supplements this theory with learning theory in order to describe the dilemmas that arise from the exchange of information. However, Gulliver's model does not explain why negotiators are faced with the dilemma of being compelled to supply more information to their opponents than they wish, nor why providing information to an opponent obligates the opponent to reciprocate. In short, Gulliver's theory of negotiation may be critiqued for modeling communication inadequately; his theory ignores the relational or social dimension of communication and relies upon an assumed process of consensual reasoning.

Bion (1961) and others have noted ways in which groups are influenced by unconscious drives that may lead to irrational (non-reflective) decisions. In contrast, a theory of consensual reasoning seeks to provide a rational (conscious or reflective) basis for group decision making as negotiation. Such a theory of consensual reasoning is apparent in Habermas' (1979) theory of dialogue (see Savage, 1983; McCarthy, 1978) which proposes that communication that seeks mutual understanding is based on four truth claims: intelligibility, accuracy, rightness, and sincerity. To the extent that a group's social interaction fulfills these claims, it is engaging in communicative action (dialogue, discourse, or action oriented to reaching an understanding). However, a group that acts insincerely (whether consciously or unconsciously) is engaging in strategic action (including manipulation and systematically distorted communication). Figure 4 displays the typology of social action delineated in the previous remarks. Note that the decision

making of the DR committee, influenced by the (unconscious) basic-assumption of fight/flight, is a case of systematically distorted communication, while the decision making of the O committee is best portrayed as communicative action.

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Table 1

Timeline of Events Preceding the Decision to Disband the Flextime Subcommittee

1979

7/12 VRG initiates discussion of flextime and a compressed work week.

7/26 The DR committee surveys employee interest in flextime and a compressed work week.

8/9 The survey results are reported, and a subcommittee is formed to draft a compressed work week proposal.

9/27 Influenced by another division-wide committee's denial of a compressed work week proposal, the DR committee drops its own proposal and tables discussion of flextime.

1980

4/11 The DR committee invites PAL (the MR plant manager) to discuss the flextime experiment at the MR plant.

4/23 PAL discusses the MR flextime experiment.

7/23 Based on a report by a facilitator that the MR plant is having problems with its flextime experiment, the DR committee tables discussion on flextime pending a final report on the experiment.

1981

6/3 The DR committee forms a subcommittee to investigate flextime with VRG as the chair.

7/1 GRY replaces GEN on the flextime subcommittee.

8/11 RPH and ARP object to implementing a flextime program in the DR plant.

9/2 The DR committee invites the MR committee to discuss flextime.

10/7 The DR committee forms a task force (VRG, BIL, DIK, and RPH) to visit the MR plant on a flextime fact-finding mission.

10/22 VRG, BIL, and I visit the MR plant; we receive a positive evaluation of the flextime program from supervisors and employees.

11/4 VRG and BIL's report on the MR flextime program is tabled pending a supervisory fact-finding mission; many negative opinions about the MR flextime program are voiced.

11/25 DIK, RPH, and I visit the MR plant; we receive a negative evaluation of the flextime program from upper level supervisors.

Table 1 (continued)

Timeline of Events Preceding the Decision to Disband the Flextime Subcommittee

1981

12/2 DIK, I, and VRG report on the findings of the flextime task force; discussion of flextime is tabled until a survey on interest in flextime by the DR employees is conducted.

12/15 VRG, BIL, and I meet to draft a survey; VRG and BIL desire to educate the DR employees about flextime prior to any survey.

12/29 VRG, BIL, and B meet and explore strategies for informing employees about flextime.

Table 2

Timeline of Events Leading to the Implementation of a Flextime Experiment

1978

Committee engages in a number of brainstorming sessions and identifies tardiness, flextime, and crosstraining as major topics for discussion. Modified nominal group techniques are used to explore the topics, and a tardiness experiment is implemented. Committee also gathers information from MR committee about that committee's flextime proposal.

1979

5/4 "A" (facilitator) reports on MR flextime experiment which will be implemented the second week of June.

6/5 GLO reports that a questionnaire on flextime will be circulated among employees at the worksite.

6/16 Results of the flextime survey are distributed to committee members as well as the superintendent (JAC) and the W division-level committee. A subcommittee is formed to investigate the feasibility of flextime.

7/6 Subcommittee reports that members are gathering information about flextime programs.

7/20 Discussion on flextime delayed until the 8/3 meeting since results of the tardiness experiment dominate committee discussion.

7/31 Subcommittee submits recommendation to committee chair (DAN).

8/3 Committee accepts the flextime subcommittee's recommendations.

8/17 Committee lists flextime as a possible solution to the problems of employe morale and productivity.

11/19 A subcommittee is formed to investigate cross-training, and the committee supports the notion that cross-training may be necessary for the success of flextime.

12/21 "A" indicates that a resource person to conduct a feasibility study may be available at the start of the new year.

1980

1/21 "J" is introduced by "A" as a new third-party facilitator.

4/18 "J" makes commitment to conduct flextime feasibility study.

5/9 "J" presents outline for the proposed flextime feasibility study.

Table 2 (continued)

Timeline of Events Leading to the Implementation of a Flextime Experiment

1980

5/28 Committee accepts "J's" proposal, and "J" agrees to complete study and distribute copies to committee members. Committee agrees to form a new flextime subcommittee once the study has been read by committee members.

6/13 "J" presents flextime study, and a flextime subcommittee is formed. Representatives from the S-division share their experiences with flextime.

6/27 CAL, chair of the flextime subcommittee, reports that a supervisor survey will soon be administered and an employee survey will follow. CAS replaces PAT on subcommittee. "J" reports that the MR flextime experiment will end in July, and an evaluation of the experiment will then be made.

7/11 SUP reports that the results of the subcommittee's flextime survey of supervisors should be available in the next few days.

7/25 BAR reports that the flextime subcommittee is still analyzing the survey results; however, with 19 of the 20 questionnaires now returned, it is clear that no supervisor opposes a flextime program.

8/8 The flextime subcommittee reports that it is preparing to distribute questionnaires on flextime to employees. "J" reports that the MR committee will not complete the evaluation of their flextime experiment until October 8th.

9/12 "J" reports that employee survey have been distributed by CAS.

9/26 The flextime subcommittee reports that 65 of the 80 employees responded to the flextime survey. "J" reports that the MR committee has completed a draft evaluation report on the flextime experiment.

10/10 The flextime subcommittee will meet on the 13th, and the employee survey results should be ready by the next committee meeting.

10/24 Most employees, according to the flextime subcommittee, are in favor of a flextime program with a core time period between 9 AM and 3 PM.

11/7 BAR reports that the subcommittee feels that plans for a flextime experiment should be put on hold since a new computer data system will soon be implemented that may hamper an experiment. JOM, JOD, and PAT disagree with BAR, and the committee decides that subcommittee should go ahead with plans to implement a flextime experiment.

Table 2 (continued)

Timeline of Events Leading to the Implementation of a Flextime Experiment

1980

11/21 CAL presents copies of flextime experiment proposal to committee members and proposes March of 1981 as a target implementation date.

12/5 Subcommittee plans to present revised proposal at next meeting; a major policy change in the proposal is accepted by the committee.

12/19 DAF presents the revised flextime experiment proposal to the committee, and CAL stresses that participation of a work unit in the proposed experiment will be at the discretion of the supervisor.

1981

1/9 CAL asks that all front line supervisors meet on the 13th to review the flextime proposal. The committee forms a Flextime Monitoring and Evaluation subcommittee to oversee the implementation and evaluation of the flextime experiment.

1/23 Committee discusses how to proceed with evaluation of the proposed flextime experiment.

2/6 Committee approves the final flextime proposal; proposal still needs JAC's approval.

3/6 Flextime proposal, though submitted to JAC (W-division superintendent), has not been approved.

4/7 JAC attends meeting and comments on proposal; CAL acts as spokesperson for the committee.

4/14 CAL submits memorandum to JAC.

5/22 Subcommittee reports that as a result of their meeting with JAC the flextime experiment will not be implemented until September 1; JAC also requests that the committee inform employees about the reasons for the delay.

5/26 Committee submits memorandum (with JAC's approval) to worksite employees explaining why implementation of the flextime program will be delayed until September, 1981.

8/14 Committee discusses flextime and agrees to postpone experiment due to problems with the computer data system; CAL is asked to draft memorandum to employees informing them of the delay.

8/28 Committee renews discussion of flextime experiment delay; HER and PAT argue about immediate implementation of the experiment.

Table 2 (continued)

Timeline of Events Leading to the Implementation of a Flextime Experiment

1981

9/24 CAL submits memorandum (with JAC's approval) to worksite employees explaining why implementation of the flextime experiment will be delayed indefinitely.

10/16 Flextime subcommittee meets and discusses a target date for implementation of the flextime experiment.

1982

1/14 Flextime subcommittee meets with JAC to discuss implementation of the flextime experiment. Subcommittee decides to implement the experiment and to meet with frontline supervisors.

1/22 Committee meets with JAC to discuss flextime; JAC also presents an overview of the proposed W-division reorganization.

1/28 Frontline supervisors meet with the flextime subcommittee and with JAC to discuss implementation of the experiment; March 1st start-up date set for experiment.

2/26 CAL reports that JAC has approved the flextime proposal and that JAC has sent a letter to ROP requesting his approval of the experiment; the start-up date is now set for April 15.

3/26 CAL reports that the subcommittee in charge of evaluating the experiment has been reconstituted. CAL also presents a letter from ROP that requests certain changes in the experiment. JAC submits memorandum to ROP requesting approval of the flextime experiment and suggests May 1st for implementation of the experiment.

3/30 Flextime subcommittee meets to plan implementation of experiment.

4/23 Flextime subcommittee presents an addendum to the proposal that addresses ROP's concerns about the experiment; May 1st is reaffirmed as the start-up date.

5/7 Flextime experiment implemented on May 3.

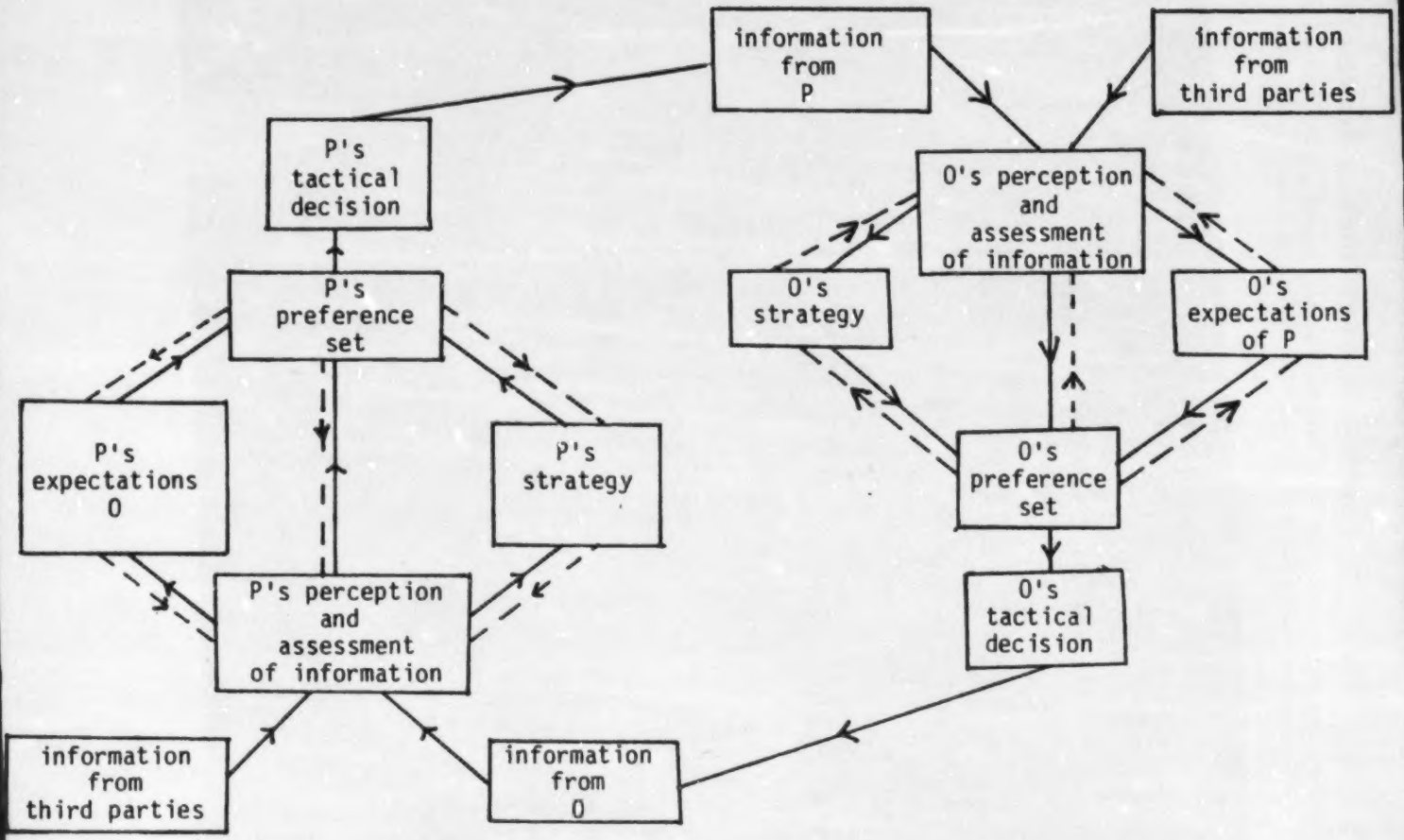

Figure 1. The Cyclical Model of Negotiation

From P. H. Gulliver, Disputes and Negotiations: A Cross-Cultural Perspective, p. 84.

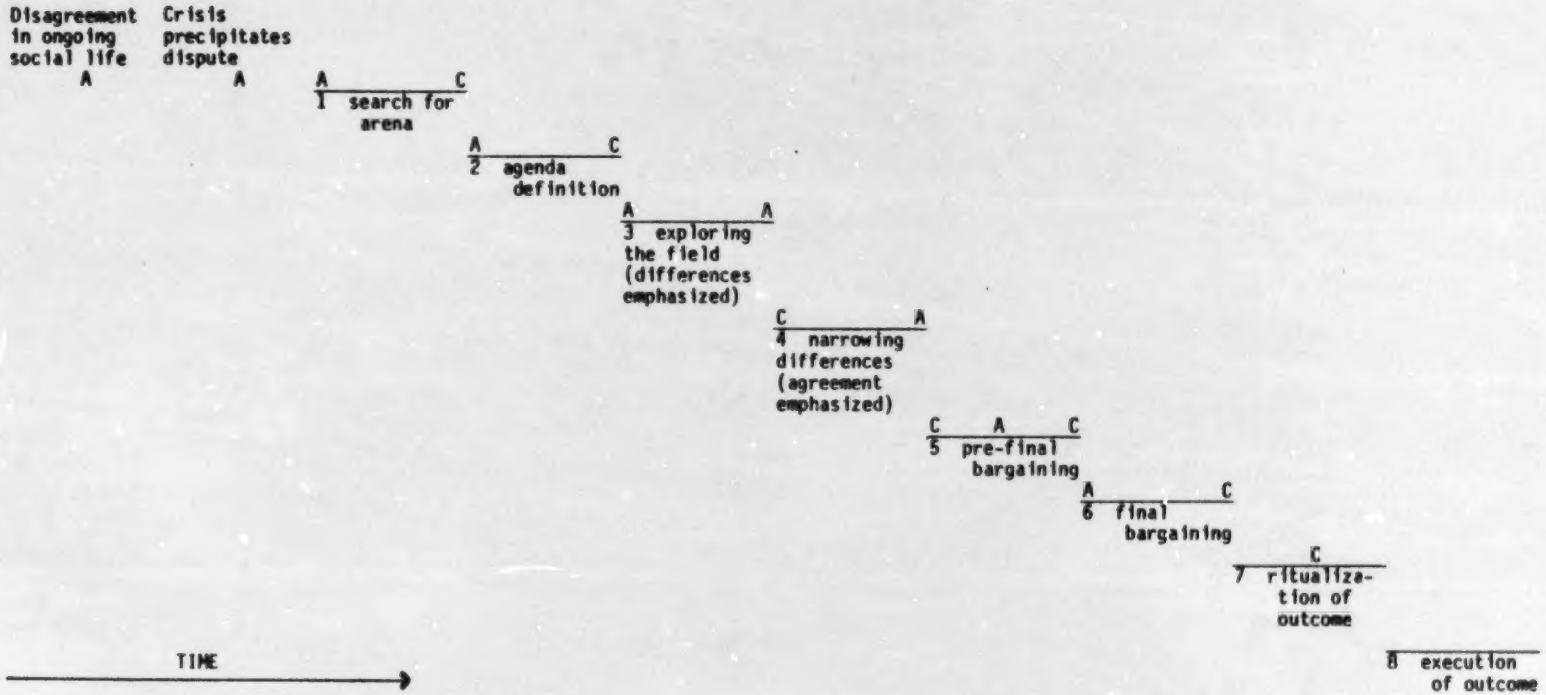

Figure 2. The Developmental Model of Negotiation: A, predominance of antagonism; C, predominance of coordination

From P. H. Gulliver, Disputes and Negotiations: A Cross-Cultural Perspective, p. 122.

Three Phase Model of Decision-Making

C A
1 Orientation: deciding what the situation is like

A C
2 Evaluation: deciding what attitudes should be taken toward the situation

C A C
3 Control: deciding what to do about the situation

TIME →

Based on Robert F. Bales and Fred L. Strodtbeck, "Phases in Group Problem-Solving."

Four Phase Model of Decision-Making

C A
1 Orientation: issue clarification

A A
2 Conflict: polarization on issue(s)

A C
3 Emergence: consensus on issue(s)*

C
4 Reinforcement: ritualization of outcome

Based on B. Aubrey Fisher, Small Group Decision Making: Communication and the Group Process, pp. 144-149.

Figure 3. The Three and Four Phase Models of Decision Making

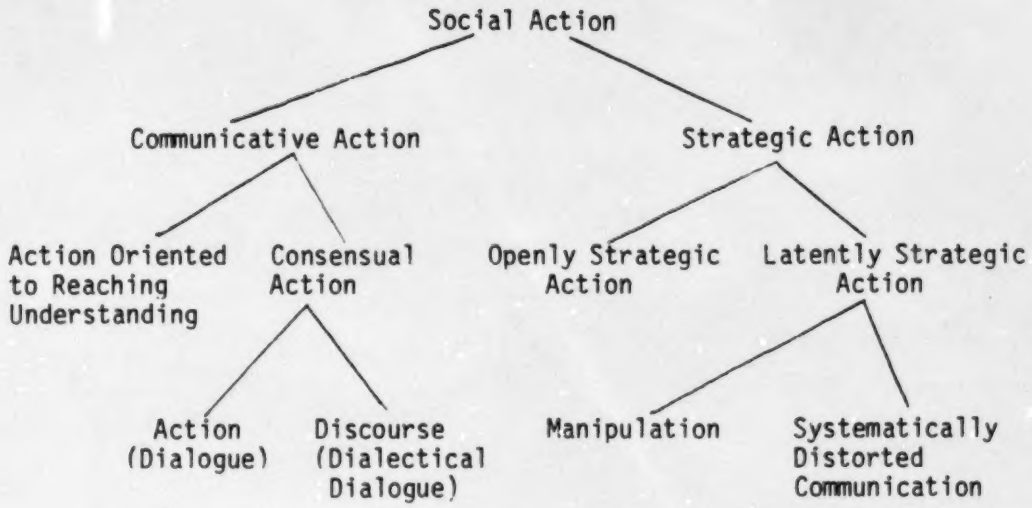

Figure 4. A Typology of Different Forms of Social Action Based on the Validity Claims Raised by Participants

Based on Jurgen Habermas, "What is Universal Pragmatics?," p. 209.